



August 9, 2011

**EX PARTE**

Ms. Marlene Dortch  
Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, CC Docket No. 96-45;  
Developing a Unified Intercarrier Compensation Regime, CC Docket  
No. 01-92; Lifeline and Link-Up, WC Docket No. 03-109; High-Cost  
Universal Service Support, WC Docket No. 05-337; Establishing Just  
and Reasonable Rates for Local Exchange Carriers, WC Docket No.  
07-135; A National Broadband Plan for Our Future, GN Docket No.  
09-51; Connect America Fund, WC Docket No. 10-90; Acceleration of  
Broadband Deployment, WC Docket No. 11-59

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On Friday, August 5, 2011, Jeff Gardner, President and CEO, Mike Rhoda, SVP, Government Affairs, Eric Einhorn, VP, Federal Government Affairs, all of Windstream, and Walter McCormick and Jon Banks of USTelecom, met with Chairman Genachowski, Eddie Lazarus, and Zac Katz.

The meeting covered a number of broad industry issues reflecting Mr. Gardner's position as the incoming Chairman of USTelecom's Board of Directors. In particular, Mr. Gardner discussed the investment climate for the communications industry and the very high levels of investment necessary to support continued upgrading and expansion of broadband. In 2010, the communications industry invested \$65 billion in broadband. By way of comparison, the federal government invested about \$40 billion in the interstate highway systems last year. Further illustrating the extremely capital intensive nature of providing broadband service, over the last 10 years broadband providers invested about \$650 billion in broadband while the federal government spent \$213 billion over 40 years (in 2011 dollars) to build the interstate highway system.

Mr. Gardner emphasized the importance of reforming universal service and intercarrier compensation, and discussed the process that led to a broad coalition proposal for reform. Mr. Gardner also addressed the important role broadband plays in creating and maintaining jobs, and the ability of small businesses to use cloud computing services to cut costs and increase productivity. Finally, Mr. McCormick discussed the importance of the Chairman's

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broadband acceleration initiative, the importance of the recent pole attachment order to broadband deployment, and the need to continue to remove outdated regulatory burdens.

Pursuant to Commission rules, please include a copy of this filing in each of the above-referenced dockets.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jonathan Banks", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jonathan Banks

c: Eddie Lazarus

Zac Katz